



THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

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JOSHUA LEDERBERG

PRESIDENT

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Dr. H. H. Saunders  
The Brookings Institution  
1775 Massachusetts Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Dr. Saunders:

I was very much taken with your chapter in "Restructuring U.S. Foreign Policy" and I hope sometime soon to have a chance to discuss it with you and John Steinbruner in somewhat greater depth.

I could not agree with you more that we need to pay far more attention to the mechanisms and opportunities of restructuring the fundamentals of international relationships -- when we spend so much time fighting "the fires in the in-basket". Am I too far afield in characterizing the desired process as an ideological shift and indeed (though most illusions to it are all too trite) as an analog to the scientific revolutions that Tom Kuhn wrote about?

What would be particularly helpful would be the collection and analysis of more historical examples and the role of personal leadership therein. Offhand, none occur to me that rival what Sadat did in the tempering of *inter*-country hostilities. My short list of analogs does not add much more than FDR's role in bringing the US into WWII, and Juan Carlos in the transition to Spanish democracy.\* Revolutionary violence, to my dismal reflection, is the more usual consequence of charisma as reflected in personalities like Hitler, Stalin and the imperial Napoleon. (Calculating where to put DeGaulle on such a list betrays the complexity of this exercise but the bottom line for him is likely both significant and positive).

But I've only given a few minutes' thought to this matter and I would very much like to see your annotated discussion.

\* Forbaker's presentation is a volume unto itself.

Letter to H. H. Saunders

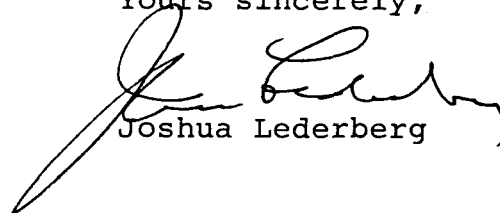
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A point of such exercise, is to try to understand a little better what are the circumstances that promote or enable such shifts. The revolutionary violent situations, the coups d'etat aside, they seem to require a political leader already in fairly confident command of his own power. For that reason alone, I am gloomy about the Middle East. Questions human benefit are all too muddled with the struggle for individual political power on both sides of the conflict in Palestine and it is not clear how they will break through those kinds of parochial interest except out of the ashes of still greater catastrophe.

Nevertheless, I would like to hear more from you about the instrumentalities by which greater attention could be given to these more deep seated issues in foreign relations. Ronald Reagan displayed an extraordinary shift in his terms of reference about arms control (but most of the institutional mechanisms that I can think of were impediments rather than encouragements to that process). People like Brzezinski Kissinger insist that the Soviet Union has an unbreakable historic tradition of expansionism and exploitation and in my own discussions with them it has been difficult to even introduce the hypothesis of possible change. Reagan nevertheless made that jump and if you know more than I do about how he came to - Reykjavik - it might illuminate the process we are discussing.

Yours sincerely,



Joshua Lederberg

Enclosure: re Kuhn

cc: John Steinbruner